

REMARKS

Claims 17-47 are pending. Applicants elect with traverse Group III (claims 17-24, 28-30 and 32-47) for examination on the merits. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute non-elected subject matter of Groups I-II, IV-VI and VIII in a divisional patent application to be filed in the future.

The amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure and, thus, no new matter is added by their entry. The scope of claim 17 is not changed because the limitations of independent claim 1 (with the exception of canceling the embodiment directed to preventing or reducing haze using alanine-specific endoproteases) are incorporated therein. Similarly, the scope of claims 18-22 is not changed by their amendment. Claims 28-30 and 35-38 are based on original claims 10-16, respectively. Support for the other amendments may be found, inter alia, in the present specification at page 4, lines 24-25, for claim 23; page 4, lines 32-33, and page 5, line 10, for claim 24; page 5, lines 9-10, for claim 32; page 6, lines 6-7, for claim 33; page 4, lines 29-31, for claim 34; and page 5, lines 14-16, for claims 39-47.

Notwithstanding the above election, reconsideration of the restriction requirement is requested because examination of all pending claims would not constitute a serious burden. Although the inventions identified by the Examiner are separately patentable, the claims of Groups III, VII and IX should be examined in the same application. Thus, claims 25-27 and 31 should not be withdrawn from consideration.

Applicants earnestly solicit an early and favorable examination on the merits. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if any further information is required.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYTE P.C.

By: /Gary R. Tanigawa/
Gary R. Tanigawa
Reg. No. 43,180

901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100